

## CLAIMS

1 A healthcare information system, comprising:  
a central information system having a global database;  
a plurality of provider office systems, each provider office system  
comprising:  
5 a local database;  
processing circuitry for:  
accessing said database for insurance information related to  
a patient's insurance plan;  
generating revisions to said insurance information; and  
10 uploading said revisions to said central information system;  
and  
wherein said central information system includes update circuitry for  
receiving said revisions from each of said provider office systems and generating  
updates to said local databases of all of said provider office systems responsive  
thereto.  
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2. The healthcare information system of claim 1 wherein said  
revisions include additional insurance information not in said local database.

3. The healthcare information system of claim 2 wherein said  
revisions include changes to insurance information already in said local  
database.

4. The healthcare information system of claim 3 wherein said  
processing circuitry uploads said revisions using e-mail.

5. The healthcare information system of claim 1 wherein said update  
circuitry verifies said revisions prior to redistributing said revisions.

6. The healthcare information system of claim 5 wherein said update circuitry verifies said revisions using electronic data interchange.

7. The healthcare information system wherein said update circuitry includes an e-mail server.

8. The healthcare information system wherein said update circuitry sends updates to the local database as attachments to an e-mail message.

9. The healthcare information system of claim 8 wherein said attachment includes one or more SQL instructions.

10. The healthcare information system of claim 1 wherein said local databases store encrypted insurance information.

11. The healthcare information system of claim 10 wherein records in said local database include a fuzzy search field, in which multiple records in said local database map to a given value in said fuzzy search field

12. The healthcare information system of claim 1 wherein said insurance information includes patient eligibility information.

13. The healthcare information system of claim 1 wherein said insurance information includes patient benefit information.

14. The healthcare information system of claim 1 wherein said insurance information includes doctor referral information.

15. The healthcare information system of claim 14 wherein referral information is submitted using electronic forms.

16. The healthcare information system of claim 15 wherein said electronic forms comprise a first text file defining a form image stored in said

~~local data base and a second text file defining data associated with respective fields on said form.~~

*add  
a1*